

What is claimed is:

1. An endoscope objective lens having a three-group, three-lens element construction, comprising, in order from the object side:
  - a first lens element of negative refractive power and either a meniscus or a plano-concave shape with its concave surface on the image side;
  - a stop;
  - a second lens element of positive refractive power and a plano-convex shape with its convex surface on the image side;
  - a third lens element of positive refractive power and a plano-convex shape with its convex surface on the object side;wherein
  - the stop positioned on or in contact with the object-side surface of the second lens element; and
  - the following conditions are satisfied
$$2.00 < |f_1 / f| < 3.00$$
$$2.50 < |f_1 / D_2| < 7.50$$
$$|D_3 / R_4| < 1.00$$where,
  - $f_1$  is the focal length of the first lens element,
  - $f$  is the focal length of the endoscope objective lens,
  - $D_2$  is the on-axis spacing between the first lens element and the second lens element,
  - $D_3$  is the center thickness of the second lens element, and
  - $R_4$  is the radius of curvature of the image-side surface of the second lens element.

2. The endoscope objective lens according to claim 1, wherein the image-side surface of the third lens element makes contact with an end surface of an optical fiber bundle, a surface of an image detector, or a cover glass for an image detector.

1 3. The endoscope objective lens according to claim 1, wherein the following condition is  
2 satisfied:

3  $nd1 > 1.80$

4 where

5  $nd1$  is the refractive index at the d-line of the first lens element.

1 4. The endoscope objective lens according to claim 2, wherein the following condition is  
2 satisfied:

3  $nd1 > 1.80$

4 where

5  $nd1$  is the refractive index at the d-line of the first lens element.

1 5. The endoscope objective lens according to claim 1, wherein the first lens element is formed  
2 by a molding process.

1 6. The endoscope objective lens according to claim 2, wherein the first lens element is formed by  
2 a molding process.

1 7. The endoscope objective lens according to claim 3, wherein the first lens element is formed  
2 by a molding process.

1 8. The endoscope objective lens according to claim 4, wherein the first lens element is formed  
2 by a molding process.

1 9. The endoscope objective lens according to claim 1, wherein the second and third lens  
2 elements are formed by a grinding process.

1 10. The endoscope objective lens according to claim 2, wherein the second and third lens  
2 elements are formed by a grinding process.

1 11. The endoscope objective lens according to claim 3, wherein the second and third lens  
2 elements are formed by a grinding process.

1 12. The endoscope objective lens according to claim 4, wherein the second and third lens  
2 elements are formed by a grinding process.

1 13. The endoscope objective lens according to claim 5, wherein the second and third lens  
2 elements are formed by a grinding process.

1 14. The endoscope objective lens according to claim 6, wherein the second and third lens  
2 elements are formed by a grinding process.

1 15. The endoscope objective lens according to claim 7, wherein the second and third lens  
2 elements are formed by a grinding process.

1 16. The endoscope objective lens according to claim 8, wherein the second and third lens  
2 elements are formed by a grinding process.